



# The President's Daily Brief

*December 5, 1975*

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(This brief, with information as of 1:00 P.M. EST, was cabled on this date to the President in Asia.)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR

*Soviet officials recently have indicated that this year's grain harvest was the lowest since the mid-1960s.*

A published statement by a middle-level Soviet official indicates that the harvest may have been about 137 million tons. Soviet Agriculture Minister Polyansky gave [ ] some figures that point to a crop of between 142 and 152 million tons. This could mean the worst harvest since 1965.

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[ ] the weather in 1975 was the worst in a hundred years.

A harvest of 137 million tons would leave the USSR short of at least 40 million tons of grain even if it imports all it can. The Soviets have bought 26.5 million tons so far this year and, under the existing agreement, they can buy only another 3.5 million tons from the US. Because only minimal amounts are available from other suppliers, we estimate that total imports will not exceed 30 million tons. The Soviets thus would have to curtail domestic consumption sharply.

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Our latest estimate of the Soviet grain crop is 150 to 155 million tons; that of the Department of Agriculture is 160 million tons. Earlier, unofficial estimates given by Soviet officials had been in the range of 160 to 170 million tons.

So far, the Soviet leadership has not employed all-out tactics for curtailing consumption such as limiting the sale or drastically reducing the quality of bread, or delivering public harangues against waste. We have, however, good evidence of distress slaughtering of livestock, reductions in feed rations, and increases in the prices of farm products.

PORTUGAL

*The Revolutionary Council has pressed ahead with plans to prosecute those responsible for the paratroopers' uprising on November 25 and 26. The Council has continued to get rid of its pro-Communists. Arrests of foreign leftists are also reported to be under way.*

The Council named an air force officer, Luis Araujo, to head a commission of inquiry to look into the uprising and instructed investigating units to prepare legal proceedings against participants. Approximately 100 soldiers have been arrested and others still are being sought. The purge has claimed 36 members of Prime Minister Azevedo's personal staff. All of those implicated thus far have been military personnel, but the government says they were part of a larger plot with broad political implications.

The Council announced the arrest Thursday of a navy member of the Council, Almada Contreiras, and issued a warrant for the arrest of his deputy as part of the continuing purge of leftist officers. Contreiras is the fifth member of the Council removed for leftist political leanings. His departure leaves only one pro-Communist still on the Council--another navy officer, Martins Guerreiro.

The military purge prompted an outcry from the Communist Party newspaper, *Avante*, on December 4. In a front-page editorial, the paper appealed for an end to the purge and the arrests, branding them a witchhunt conducted by reactionaries. The Communists are on the defensive, but they still appear unprepared to accept the conditions recently set forth by the Socialists for continued Communist participation in the cabinet--repudiation of the military uprising and a pledge of loyalty to the Azevedo government. *Avante* said that a capitulation by the party on such matters of principle was not possible.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

## TURKEY

*Renewed student unrest and violence between leftist and rightist street gangs are heightening political tension and exasperating the military.*

Officers on the general staff reportedly expected their chief, General Sancar, to relay the military's growing impatience with government procrastination to Prime Minister Demirel on December 5. The officers thought that Sancar would warn Demirel--as he reportedly did early last month--that the armed forces do not wish to see the political climate deteriorate to a point requiring a military ultimatum to the government similar to that which forced Demirel to resign in 1971 under similar circumstances. Sancar is expected to advise Demirel to begin preparations for declaring martial law in Istanbul and Ankara provinces. Perhaps in anticipation of a warning from the chief of the general staff, Demirel held a lengthy cabinet meeting on December 4 after which the government announced that it is taking all necessary measures against "those who would provoke anarchy."

Disquiet in the military may have been heightened by the murder earlier this week of two students in Istanbul and the sympathy demonstrations that followed in Ankara and Izmir as well as in Istanbul. The incident and the demonstrations provoked another round of bitter recrimination among Turkey's major political parties. Demirel's ruling party accused Ecevit's opposition party of "moving the political struggle into the streets" in an effort to seize power. The opposition responded by charging that the disorders were being used to divert public attention from internal divisions in the government coalition and from Turkey's increasingly serious economic and social problems.

We have no evidence that the generals are prepared to go beyond putting pressure on the government to act, but the violence and the near paralysis of the government are testing their patience. Most of them appear at this time to have little desire to take on the burden of dealing with Turkey's seemingly intractable problems. Some junior officers may not share their seniors' reluctance.

## SPANISH SAHARA

*Morocco and Algeria are intensify-  
ing their bitter propaganda exchanges as  
Rabat moves rapidly to consolidate its  
foothold in Spanish Sahara.*

Numerous Moroccan officials have traveled to the Spanish Saharan capital of El Aaiun to participate in the new administration; postal service, airline connections, and telephone links with Rabat have been set up. Morocco's claim that Saharan views are being taken into account is in part based on the Saharan territorial general assembly's approval last week of the Spanish-Moroccan-Mauritanian agreement and the announcement of its fealty to King Hassan. A Spanish correspondent claims, however, that less than one third of the members attended the special meeting.

Algeria, meanwhile, has accused Spanish officials of facilitating Rabat's takeover. The press and radio are highlighting the allegations of the Polisario Front--a Saharan independence movement backed by Algiers--of Moroccan atrocities against civilians. Clashes between Moroccan troops and Polisario guerrillas have been occurring for several weeks, but most have probably been skirmishes instead of the fierce battles described by the Front. Algeria also reinforced its borders with Morocco and Spanish Sahara last month and is continuing to take other limited military steps.

The Spanish are accelerating their withdrawal from Sahara to avoid hostilities with Morocco, the Polisario Front, or Algiers.

THAILAND - NORTH VIETNAM - CHINA

*Hanoi apparently has begun to challenge China's long-standing dominance of the Thai Communist Party.*

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*at least some Thai insurgent leaders in northeast Thailand are complaining that North Vietnam is now obstructing the flow of Chinese assistance in order to pressure the movement into accepting guidance from Hanoi rather than Peking.*

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During the Vietnam war years, the North Vietnamese facilitated the movement of men and supplies between Thailand and China, and also channeled Chinese funds to the Thai communists. The North Vietnamese themselves provided material support and training to the insurgents.

The shift in Hanoi's stance apparently occurred last summer. In August, insurgents in Thailand began to notice a drop in deliveries of supplies and funds from China. By November, the communications route through Vietnam to China was closed, and the insurgents were unable to send personnel to China for training.

Hanoi later ordered all routes closed, alleging that Thai government border operations along the Mekong made the routes unusable. The insurgents, however, have concluded that North Vietnam is deliberately blocking these channels in order to pressure the Thai party into adopting a more pro-Hanoi orientation. In early November, an insurgent province chief sharply criticized the Vietnamese for following the "revisionist line" of the Soviets and dismissed the Lao communist party as a lackey of Hanoi. Although he admitted that the Thai Communist Party still depends on Vietnamese material aid, he vowed that the Thai party would never accept "the Soviet line."

Over the past few months, China and North Vietnam have expressed growing differences, both directly and indirectly, over such matters as sovereignty over the Paracel and Spratly islands, the Soviet "threat" in Southeast Asia, and the issue of detente.

It is too early to tell whether their competition for influence will lead to an overall weakening of the insurgent movement in Thailand.



NOTES

*The UN Security Council on December 4 invited the Palestine Liberation Organization to take part in its debate over the recent Israeli bombings of refugee camps in Lebanon. The vote was nine to three with three abstentions. The US, Britain, and Costa Rica opposed the move, while France, Italy, and Japan abstained. The session was held at the request of Egypt and Lebanon.*

Egypt doubtless will claim the vote is a victory for its efforts on behalf of the PLO in hopes of receiving some of the credit for the PLO's enhanced position at the UN. Syria was instrumental earlier this week in getting the Security Council to invite the PLO to participate in a general discussion of the Middle East problem next month. In anticipation of the outcome of the vote, Israel boycotted the debate.

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*Two more SS-7 above-ground launchers were seen being dismantled at the USSR's Svobodny ICBM complex.*

This brings to 38 the number of launchers for older ICBMs that have been or are being dismantled in accordance with the SALT Interim Agreement, which allows older launchers to be dismantled and replaced by launch tubes on ballistic-missile submarines. All launchers dismantled to date have been above ground, but the Soviets may have started to dismantle older ICBM silos for the first time. The doors for three silos at Svobodny were open and the silos were empty, and there was some digging in the vicinity of the control bunker.

\* \* \*

*Iceland may take its fishing dispute with the UK to the UN.*

Reykjavik is determined to attract world attention and sympathy to its cause, and after deciding not to withdraw from NATO, the government may believe that a UN resolution will advance its case. Its objective at the UN would be a resolution in the General Assembly branding the UK an aggressor. According to a high official in the Icelandic Foreign Ministry, the recent "irresponsible actions" of the General Assembly would make approval of Iceland's case there "a certainty."

*Top Secret*